

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-4 and 6-13 are pending. A typographical error in the specification is corrected.

In the Office Action of February 8, 2006, the Examiner rejected the claims as being indefinite, stating that it was unclear whether the latching region and the two vertical parallel ring legs were the same entity. By this Amendment, claim 5 has been cancelled and the subject matter inserted into claim 1. Claim 1 now states that the latching region is formed in a ring leg, a feature not disclosed by Eckerle. This subject matter is further defined in claims 6 and 7 which recite the latching region is a tongue formed in the outer ring leg and that the tongue is formed by two incisions in the outer ring leg. The Examiner had relied upon EP 0563567 for disclosing incisions next to a resiliently elastic tongue. However, EP '567 shows incisions 6 formed in a flange of a ring, not an outer leg. These incisions allow the flanges 7 to follow the curvature of the ring as its diameter increases and decreases due to the action of the latch 4. The tabs formed between the incisions serve no latching function.


Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form. The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Eckerle, referring to Figure 4 for showing the inturned flange 36 engaged under stiffening rib 18. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 8 recites the ring having two vertical parallel ring legs and a latching region of the ring snapping over the step formed on the upper region of the receptacle. Eckerle discloses a ring having an over-the-center latch 30 allowing the diameter of the ring to increase. After the ring is placed over the top of the receptacle, the latch is closed to decrease the diameter of the ring and position the inturned flange under the stiffening rib. The inturned flange does not snap over the step as is claimed.

Claim 11 has also been rewritten in independent form, as the Examiner indicated that this claim contained allowable subject matter.

If any issues remain and the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation would resolve such issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney.

If any fees are due and owing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 08-2455.

Respectfully submitted,



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